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V.—CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE.

(1) DAMAGES CAUSED DUE TO CYCLONE AND HEAVY RAINS IN RAMESWARAM AND DHANUSHKODI.

SRI S. MADHAVAN :
SRI K. CHEEMAICHAMY :
SRI P. K. MOOKIAH THEVAR :
SRI K. A. MATHIALAGAN : } called the attention of the Hon. Chief Minister to the damages caused by the cyclone and heavy rains during December 1964 in Rameswaram and Dhanushkodi and the relief measures taken by the Government.

THE HON SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to make this statement with a heavy heart and deep feelings of sorrow and sympathy.

We are all aware of the unprecedented cyclone and floods that hit the South East Coast of our State on the 22nd and 23rd December 1964 and of their devastating effects on the lives and properties of the people in the coastal villages of Ramanathapuram and Thanjavur districts. The weather warnings and forecasts received on the 22nd December to the effect that a gale may cross the coast between Nagapattinam and Thondi were communicated to the Collectors concerned by telegram and telephone then and there. The first wireless message about the disaster was received at 12-40 p.m. on 23rd December 1964 by the Chief Secretary to Government. It was from the Wireless Operator, Police Radio Station at Dhanushkodi and was to the effect that there was heavy gale and storm and heavy casualties in Dhanushkodi and requesting food and relief by plane to save the people. Immediately, the Minister for Food took the service plane for Madurai with a view to go to Dhanushkodi, but due to stormy weather, the plane could not land at Tiruchirappalli or Madurai and so the Minister returned to Madras at about 6-30 p.m. He, however, proceeded to Madurai by the Trivandrum Express the same night along with the Revenue Secretary. The Home Minister also left for the affected areas by the same train. In the meantime, the Collector of Ramanathapuram, on receiving a wireless message about the cyclone, arranged immediately to despatch Armed Reserve Sections to the affected areas for relief operations. He also sent a wireless message to Government asking for Army and Naval assistance for rescue operations in Dhanushkodi area, which had been cut away from the main Rameswaram Island. On the same day, the Collector and the Superintendent of Police, Ramanathapuram at Madurai, tried to proceed to Mandapam. But as the road was blocked in several places due to uprooted trees, they were forced to return to Madurai. On 24th December 1964 morning, the Food Minister, the Home Minister and the Revenue Secretary rached Madurai with great difficulty from Tiruchirappalli by road, after getting the road cleared, of fallen trees. Within a few hours of reaching Madurai, the Food Minister took off in an I.A.F. plane and made an aerial survey of

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the cyclone affected area particularly Rameswaram Island and food packets were dropped from the same plane to the people at Dhanushkodi and other parts of the Island who were marooned.

2. On his return after the aerial survey, the Food Minister left for Mandapam by road which was rendered motorable by Armed Reserve parties and Highways staff by 3-00 p.m. The Home Minister, the Collector and the Revenue Secretary also accompanied him. On the way from Madurai to Mandapam, it was noticed that the Vaigai River was in spate and that several major and minor tanks fed by the Vaigai River had breached. On reaching Mandapam at about 7 p.m., immediate contact with Madras and Madurai was established through the Police Wireless and arrangements were made for further air dropping of food packets, requisitioning of helicopters and small ships for evacuating the people from Dhanushkodi. The Heads of Departments concerned with relief and rehabilitation measures were summoned to the spot for directing the operations personally.

3. Besides the Food Minister and the Home Minister who had reached Mandapam on 24th December 1964, myself and the Inspector-General of Police flew over the affected area on 25th December 1964, and made an aerial survey of the impact and extent of damages caused by the cyclone, by an I.A.F. plane. On the 25th December 1964, the Minister for Food and the Minister for Home reached Pamban with food packets by a vessel of the Fisheries Department and guided the relief operations and spoke words of solace and assured all aid to the affected people. The Home Minister reached Rameswaram and halted there for the night. The next day (26th December 1964), two helicopters arrived at Ramanathapuram early in the morning and they were used by the Food Minister, the Home Minister and the Revenue Secretary for landing in Dhanushkodi and obtaining firsthand information about the cyclone and its havoc. I.N.S. Sarada, a customs vessel had reached Dhanushkodi on the 25th and evacuated about 111 persons to Mandapam on that date. On the 26th I.N.S. Sarada and three motor boats of the Fisheries Department again proceeded to Dhanushkodi with supplies of food, rice and fresh water and about 200 persons were evacuated with all their belongings to Mandapam. The care and consideration shown by the crew of I.N.S. Sarada in handling the strenuous and delicate task of putting aged women and children into the ship from the damaged pier was commendable. Three more motor boats from Tuticorin reached Mandapam the same evening. Air-dropping of food packets continued on the 26th also.

A large number of feeding centres were opened in the affected villages of Ramanathapuram taluk and feeding centres were established at Mandapam, Pamban, Rameswaram and Rameswaram road. A medical relief centre was also opened at Mandapam to deal with cases requiring urgent attention. A team of doctors and nursing staff rushed to Mandapam from Madurai for this purpose.

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Special revenue staff including a Deputy Collector, a number of Deputy Tahsildars and Revenue Inspectors were appointed by the Collector with the on-the-spot-approval of the Revenue Secretary, for assessing the damages and for providing the required relief. The Minister for Local Administration visited Paramakudi and Ramanathapuram Taluks on 27th December 1964 and reached Mandapam on the 28th. The Minister for Information and Publicity visited Mandapam on 29th December 1964 to study the damages of the cyclone. The Minister for Industries inspected the coastal areas in Arantangi to study the extent of damages caused by the cyclone in the coastal villages of Thanjavur district. There were also heads of departments such as the Director of Fisheries and State Port Officer, Chairman, State Electricity Board and the Chief Engineers to attend to such relief and restoration measures as were necessary on the spot.

4. The first official party to reach Dhanushkodi proper was the Revenue Divisional Officer, Ramanathapuram, and the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Mudukulathur, along with a party of men. As Dhanushkodi was completely cut off from the main Rameswaram Island and as about 3,000 people who were stranded there were starving, they were fed by dropping food packets by I.A.F. Dakotas. This work was started on the 24th December 1964 and continued for six days, till all the persons who wanted to be evacuated were brought to the mainland. The evacuation through I.N.S. Sarada, I.N.S. Magar and fisheries launches continued till 31st December 1964 when all persons who were to be evacuated were finally evacuated. All the evacuees from Dhanushkodi numbering 477 families, were receiving at the reception and relief centre at Mandapam camp and are being fed freely. Of these, about 115 families are fishermen and the rest belong to petty trades and miscellaneous occupations including coolies. The feeding centre at Rameswaram was discontinued from 12th January 1965, as the disbursement of cash relief in the Island had almost been completed. A sum of Rs. 1,01,270 has been paid to 3,694 victims in the Island. The evacuees from Dhanushkodi have been given free clothing, mats and utensils and all gifts received from voluntary agencies are being distributed to them and they have been settled well in the camp. Medical facilities are also provided. A Special Deputy Collector has been posted at Mandapam Camp specially with other staff to look after them and to attend to rehabilitation work in Mandapam and Rameswaram Islands.

5. Turning to damage—

(a) *Loss of life*.—Enquiries indicate that the residents of Dhanushkodi were aware of the gale warning on the 22nd and that fishermen did not generally go out fishing in the sea on that day. It is also learnt that the sales in the ice sales depots in the Island were practically nil on that date, since catches were also nil or poor. The cyclone and the tidal waves seem to have attained their maximum fury by about the midnight of 22nd

December rendering it very difficult for the fishermen and others to run to places of safety. Still, a good number of the residents managed to take refuge in the Station buildings and the empty compartments of a train stationed in the yard. All the huts were washed away by the tidal waves which seem to have risen from both sides of the narrow Island as high as 15 to 20 feet. A passenger train which left Pamban at 23.55 hours with reportedly 110 passengers and a crew of 5, got held up at the outer signal of Dhanushkodi Station and while it was perhaps waiting in futile for the usual signal, was engulfed by powerful tidal waves and was smashed to pieces. Correct information as to the actual number of travellers in this train at the time of the accident is lacking. Similarly, reliable information as to the number and identity of persons who were washed away from their huts on houses or from their fishing boats is not available. So far, it has been possible to compile and publish a list of only 100 persons who were dead or missing. Only about 100 bodies were seen or traceable in the island and they have been disposed of by the Police and the Health Staff. However, considering the normal population of the affected parts, the information so far received and other relevant details, it is estimated that the total number of deaths will not exceed 500 on any account.

(b) *Loss of property.*—The greatest loss of public property is the total destruction of the steel draw bridge of the Southern Railway, 6,700 feet long, connecting Pamban with Mandapam on the mainland. This was built in 1914 and was considered an engineering marvel at that time. The entire steel structure excluding a few spans on the Mandapam side and the lift bridge was swept off the masonry piers by the gigantic tidal waves which rose to a great height on the night of the 22nd December 1964.

The railway track between Ramanathapuram and Mandapam and again between Rameswaram Road and Dhanushkodi was eroded in large stretches and was even submerged in certain places.

Thatched huts were the worst hit and tiled houses also lost their roofs. A large number of trees got uprooted and caused serious damage to buildings and roadways. The total number of huts and houses damaged in the island as well as in the eastern taluks of Ramanathapuram District is estimated to be about Rs. 40,000.

A large number of public buildings such as offices, schools and hospitals suffered serious damage. The High School building at Rameswaram, the buildings of three High Schools at Ramanathapuram, one at Devakottai and the buildings of 76 aided and recognised schools fall under this category.

Varying lengths of two National Highways, ten major district roads and thirteen other district roads were also damaged due to flooding and the falling of uprooted trees.

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As many as 289 irrigation tanks, mostly in the F.P. circle, suffered breaches and 95 tanks were damaged due to scour.

About 9,000 acres of cultivated land got silted up or sand cast, due to tank breaches.

Loss of cattle has been quite heavy. About 4,000 heads of cattle and 20,000 sheep are reported to have perished due to the cyclone.

The loss sustained by fishermen is the largest in number and value. It is estimated that 445 fishing boats were totally destroyed, over 850 boats seriously damaged and that as many as 13,000 nets (cotton and nylon) were totally lost, apart from 21,000 nets badly damaged.

Coconut topes, betel and plantain gardens also suffered considerable damage in the affected area.

6. Apart from the heavy damages caused to the Rameswaram island, the coastal villages in Ramanathapuram and Tiruvadanai taluks and interior villages in the main taluks of Ramanathapuram, Tiruvadanai, Mudukulathur, Sivaganga, Paramakudi and in the sub-taluks of Kamuthi, Tiruchuli, Devakottai, Manamadurai and Elayangudi, were also affected and several persons were rendered homeless. So 179 feeding centres in the coastal and other interior villages were started in needy areas in Ramanathapuram and Paramakudi taluks and they were run till 1st January 1965 to feed the cyclone-affected victims. In certain badly affected villages, the feeding was continued till 4th January 1965. In Tiruvadanai taluk, rice and sooji were distributed free to the victims.

7. Extensive damages were caused to the Electricity and Telephone communications. The communications have now been restored. The train service from Madurai to Mandapam was also restored within a week of the havoc, as also the train service between Pamban and Rameswaram. Train service has been extended beyond Mandapam up to Thonithurai, the tip of the mainland from where ferry service is run. This ferry service from Mandapam to Pamban has been commissioned into operation from 29th December 1964. A fare of only 50 Paise is charged per trip per head for adults and 25 Paise for children. On an average, 1,200 passengers make use of this service daily. Pending reconstruction of the railway bridge from Mandapam to Pamban, which is scheduled to be completed before 30th June 1965, the Government have arranged for a cargo ferry service to be operated by the Southern Railways using the boats taken over from Parry and Company, Madras, and a ferry service for passengers is also run by the State Port Officer with six boats. The Divisional Engineer, Highways and Rural Works, has been asked to lay jeepable roads from Rameswaram to Dhanushkodi and also from Mandapam to Thonithurai, to afford facilities to the pilgrims. The road from Pamban to Rameswaram has been made jeepable and a jeep-bus service with three jeep-buses is expected to function shortly.

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8. After introduction of ferry service, private merchants are transporting consumer goods without any difficulty. Ramaeswaram Co-operative Stores and Rameswaram Devasthanam are running a fair price shop each at Rameswaram. The R.D.C.S. & M.S., Ltd., at Madurai are also running four rice fair price shops, one at Pamban, one at Thangachimadam and two at Rameswaram. Non-availability of consumer goods has not been reported. The situation is under close watch.

9. After making an on-the-spot study of the impact of the cyclone and floods, and the extent of damages they caused to the life and property in the area, I convened a meeting at Mandapam on 28th December 1964 which was attended by the Minister for Food, Minister for Local Administration, Commissioner of Land Revenue, the Revenue Secretary, the Collector of Ramanathapuram and other heads of Departments and officials. The Union Minister for Finance also made an aerial survey of the affected area on the 28th and participated in the discussions at Mandapam on that date. He was pleased to announce that advance action on the Sethusamudram Canal Project would be taken up immediately, so that employment opportunities for the displaced men could be provided without loss of time. At that meeting, certain decisions were taken to concert measures for the relief and rehabilitation of the victims of the cyclone. In pursuance of these decisions funds are being allotted for sanctioning cash grants and loans to the victims for such purposes as feeding, repairs or reconstruction of damaged houses, purchased of clothes, repair or purchase of boats and fishing nets, reclamation of lands, replacement of cattle and sheep, purchase of fertilizers and seeds, starting of business, etc., and for such departmental works as repairs to public and school buildings, irrigation tanks, road, etc. A brief account of these
10-00 a.m. measures of relief and rehabilitation is given below :—

10. (A) *Measures sponsored by the Revenue Department—I Grants*—(i) *For persons other than fishermen of Dhanushkodi.*—According to the decision arrived at the meeting convened by me on 28th December 1964, a cash grant at the rate of Rs. 30 for each hut completely damaged and at Rs. 20 for each hut partially damaged and a clothing grant of Rs. 10 for each family are given. So far an allotment of Rs. 11 lakhs has been sanctioned towards this expenditure in Ramanathapuram district. An allotment of Rs. 1 lakh has been sanctioned for Madurai district and Rs. 50,000 for Thanjavur district bringing the total allotment so far sanctioned for cash grant to Rs. 12.5 lakhs.

(ii) *For fishermen of Dhanushkodi.*—There are about 115 families of fishermen of Dhanushkodi now in the Mandapam feeding centre. In accordance with the decision arrived at the meeting on 28th December 1964, a cash grant of Rs. 100 per family is paid in addition to any loan assistance so that they could re-establish themselves immediately. An expenditure of Rs. 11,500 has been sanctioned in this behalf.

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(iii) *Feeding charges.*—About 179 feeding centres were run for three days and in some cases for a few more days in Ramanathapuram district. The feeding centres at Rameswaram and Mandapam are still functioning with an attendance of about 1,500 persons per diem. An expenditure not exceeding Rs. 1.35 lakhs has been sanctioned towards the free-feeding and incidental charges.

(B) *Measures sponsored by the Public Works Department.*

(i) *Irrigation.*—289 tanks were breached and 95 tanks were damaged due to scour. The Superintending Engineer (F.P.) has applied for an allotment of Rs. 18 lakhs towards cost of repair to these tanks and this allotment will be sanctioned shortly.

(ii) *Roads and buildings.*—Extensive damages have been caused to the roads and buildings in Ramanathapuram, Madurai and Thanjavur districts, particularly in Sivaganga division of Ramanathapuram district. The Chief Engineer (Highways and Rural Works) has been requested to take up repairs and restoration works including Panchayat Union roads and buildings at Government expense as part of cyclonic relief measure without reference to the Panchayat Unions. These works are estimated to cost of Rs. 27.65 lakhs. The question of sanctioning about Rs. 47,000 towards repairs to aided school buildings is also under consideration.

The cyclone has damaged the approach roads linking the coastal villages with the main highway roads, thereby dislocating the quick transport of fish catches from these villages to the consuming centres and to the nearest railroads. The financial commitment on account of repairing these roads is Rs. 2,10,000. The question of sanctioning the expenditure on this account is under consideration.

The total cost of repair to buildings and roads will therefore be Rs. 30.22 lakhs.

(C) *Measures sponsored by the fisheries department*—(i) *Repairs and replacement of fishing nets.*—(*a*) Fishermen who have lost their nets or whose nets have been damaged beyond repair will be given 25 kgs. of nylon costing approximately Rs. 900. The supply will be on a 50 per cent subsidy and 50 per cent loan basis.

(*b*) Fishermen who have lost their cotton nets but want to go in for nylon nets will be granted the same concession just above mentioned.

(*c*) Fishermen who want only cotton nets will be given cotton yarns to the value up to Rs. 300 on a 50 per cent subsidy and 50 per cent loan basis.

(*d*) For repairing nets 10 kgs. of nylon or Rs. 100 worth cotton will be supplied on half subsidy and half loan basis.

(*e*) In cases where the total cost of repairing cotton nets is Rs. 50 or less the entire amount will be given as a grant.

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(ii) *Repair and replacement of boats.*—(*a*) Fishermen who have lost their boat or whose boats have been damaged beyond repair will be given assistance up to Rs. 2,000 in each case on 50 per cent subsidy and 50 per cent loan basis.

(*b*) Fishermen who have lost an inferior type of boat and want to build a better boat will be given financial assistance to the extent of half the cost of the boat lost as subsidy and a loan up to Rs. 1,000.

(*c*) For repairing boats financial assistance up to Rs. 750 will be given on the basis of 50 per cent subsidy and 50 per cent loan basis.

(*d*) In cases where the repair charge is estimated at Rs. 100 or less assistance will be given as an outright grant and in marginal cases where it exceeds Rs. 100 and is below Rs. 200 the excess over Rs. 100 will be treated as loan.

The subsidy portion of all these items of expenditure will come to Rs. 15.11 lakhs.

(D) *Measures sponsored by the Agriculture department*—(i) *Purchase of fertilizers.*—The ryots of Ramanathapuram, Paramakudi and Mudukulathur taluks in Ramanathapuram district have either used up their farm-yard manure or have lost them in the rains and they are in need of financial assistance. They will be given 50 per cent of the cost of fertilizers and subsidy and other 50 per cent as loan. The subsidy portion of the concession will come to Rs. 55,000.

(ii) *Coconut topes.*—It is proposed to supply coconut seedlings at half cost for planting new coconut seedlings in the place of lost plants and to supply fertilizers at half cost as a compensation for the loss in the yield of the uprooted or spoiled trees. The amount of subsidy under this head will be Rs. 50,000.

(iii) *Special staff.*—To attend to cyclonic relief work, two Deputy Collectors, 11 Deputy Tahsildars and other ministerial staff have been sanctioned. The cost of this special staff at Rs. 15,000 per mensem for six months will come to Rs. 90,000.

11. *Loans*—(A) *Loans sponsored by the Revenue department*—(1) *Repair or reconstruction of houses.*—The Collector has stated that about 30,000 houses have been either fully or partially damaged, due to cyclone and that about 8,000 cases may require loans. It has been recommended in pursuance of the decision at the meeting convened by me on 28th December 1964, that—

(i) in the case of fishermen from Dhanushkodi, each family may be given a loan up to Rs. 250 for reconstruction of their houses and that,

(ii) in the case of others, a loan up to Rs. 150 each may be given to repair or reconstruct thatched huts and a loan up to Rs. 500 each for repairing or reconstructing tiled houses.

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(iii) The total allotment required for these loans is estimated at Rs. 22,50,000. The Government have accepted the recommendation and have accordingly sanctioned an initial allotment of Rs. 10 lakhs (rupees ten lakhs only) as requested by the Collector for the grant of house of the categories mentioned above. Of these categories, loans for repairing or reconstructing tiled houses will be granted on proper security and the others on personal security. The loans to the fishermen from Dhanushkodi will be given after obtaining their consent to move to the places chosen and allotted by the Collector and construct the huts thereon. The loans will be sanctioned under the Agriculturists Loans Act and the Rules made thereunder and will be repayable in twelve half-yearly instalments, the first instalment commencing from 1st October 1965. The loans will carry interest at 6 per cent per annum.

(2) *Reclamation of lands.*—About 9,000 acres of land in Ramanathapuram district have become silted or sand-cast mainly due to tank breaches and the Collector of the district expects to receive applications for loan to reclaim about 1,000 acres. Loans will be granted up to Rs. 200 per acre. The total allotment required for this purpose is Rs. 2 lakhs and this allotment has been sanctioned.

(3) *Replacement of cattle and other live-stock—Work cattle and sheep.*—It is reported that about 4,000 heads of cattle and buffaloes and 20,000 sheep have been lost. The Collector of Ramanathapuram has recommended the grant of an interest-free loan up to Rs. 1,000 per individual for the replacement of work-cattle lost due to the cyclone at the rate of Rs. 250 per bullock and an interests-free loan up to Rs. 500 per individual for purchase of not less than 20 sheep, both loans repayable in six annual instalments. This Government have accepted this recommendation and have sanctioned an initial allotment of Rs. 2 lakhs under each head. But the total estimated expenditure under each head is Rs. 7 lakhs and Rs. 5 lakhs respectively, that is Rs. 12 lakhs.

(4) *Crops—Betelvines and Plantain topes.*—The Collector has been authorised to grant interest-free loans not exceeding Rs. 400 per acre of betelvine and not exceeding Rs. 200 per acre of plantain crop for the purpose of replantation, repayable in two annual instalments. An allotment of Rs. 1 lakh has been sanctioned by Government for the purpose.

(5) *Business and occupational loans for the displaced persons.*—It has been decided to grant business or occupational loans up to Rs. 500 per family of displaced persons who cannot be rehabilitated otherwise. The loan will be repayable in 12 quarterly instalments with 3 per cent interest. An allotment of Rs. 1.25 lakhs has been sanctioned by Government for this purpose.

(6) *Subsistence loans to purohits-*cum-*guides of Rameswaram.*—Consequent on the diminution of pilgrims traffic to Rameswaram due to the cyclone and the temporary loss of livelihood

to this class of persons in Rameswaram, it has been decided to grant an interest-free loan of Rs. 50 each on personal security, repayable in ten equal monthly instalments commencing from March, 1965. The Government have sanctioned an allotment of Rs. 10,000 for the grant of such loans.

(B) *Loans sponsored by the Fisheries department.*—The various heads under which the Government have sanctioned assistance to the Fishermen on a subsidy-*cum*-loan basis, have been dealt with earlier in this statement. The loan portion of the assistance relating to boats and nets is as given below :

	RS.
Repairs and replacement of boats	7,12,400
Repairs and replacement of nets	6,73,500
	13,85,900

or Rs. 13.86 lakhs roundly.

(C) *Loans sponsored by the Agriculture department.*—The assistance on a subsidy-*cum*-loan basis have already been mentioned in this statement. The loans portion under the various heads is as given below :

	RS.
Supply of fertilisers	55,000
Loan for seeds	50,000
Supply of coconut seedlings	25,000
Total ...	1,30,000

The total commitment of this Government under the various schemes outlined above is Rs. 1,33,25,000 of which Rs. 79,24,000 will be on grants and Rs. 54,01,000 on loans.

12. The Honourable Members of the House will, I am sure, agree with me that the calamity which overtook us was an act of God and could not be fully foreseen or its effects avoided or diminished beyond what has been possible. It will also be clear from the foregoing statement that the Government and its Officers lost no time in reaching the affected area and in organising relief and restoration measures. Financial considerations have not at all stood in the way of affording the relief the situation warranted and everything humanly possible has been and is being done with utmost speed and sympathy. I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to my own colleagues and the Officers of the Government who have spared no pains to bring solace and aid to the unfortunate

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victims and also to the Government of India, particularly the Finance and Defence Ministries, for their immediate response to our call for assistance by way of rescue ships, I.A.F. planes and helicopters without which it would not have been possible to restore normally so speedily and so satisfactorily.

I am also very happy to note the spontaneous and liberal flow of assistance from people and organisations all over the country and even from friendly nations like the United States of America, Canada, Australia, etc., both in cash and in kind. I wish to express my gratitude to all these persons and institutions and assure them that the contributions made by them will be put to the very best use possible in the interests of the affected victims.

(2) POLICE FIRING ON STUDENTS OF SCOTT CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, NAGERCOIL.

Sri S. MADHAVAN :
Sri M. V. KARIVENGADAM :
Sri R. PONNAPPA NADAR :
Sri A. KUNJAN NADAR :
} Called the attention of the

Hon. Chief Minister to the Police firing on the students of the Scott Christian College, Nagercoil, the reasons therefor, the consequences thereof and the action taken by the Government.

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the firing incident at Nagercoil on 2nd December 1964 had its origin in the earlier incidents in the village of Thuthoor. On the morning of 26th November 1964, Sri Veluswami, probationary Sub-Inspector of Kollengode left his station to investigate a case of theft of an avenue tree at Chengavillay. After enquiring into this matter, he proceeded to Thuthoor village which is seven miles from Kollengode Police station. The object of this visit was to question one Kanaga Nadar, a student of Pius XI High School, who was alleged to have sent petitions against the Sub-Inspector. In the course of this enquiry, he assaulted Kanaga Nadar in the open street. This infuriated the local people who had gathered round the scene and they became restive. As the crowd gathered the situation began to take a serious turn. The Headmaster of the Pius XI High School who lived closely, realised the danger as the Sub-Inspector was running and took the Sub-Inspector and the constable into his house. In the meantime the crowd had become very large and angry and surrounded the Headmaster's house. They did not allow the Sub-Inspector and constable to come out. The Deputy Superintendent of Police, Thuckalay, who got information of the incident, sent a Police party to the spot in the evening and rescued the Sub-Inspector and the constable. The Sub-Inspector then arrested the Headmaster and some teachers who were in the crowd and took them to Kulithurai Police station. It is alleged that at Kulithurai, the Headmaster and his Assistants